



*Translating concern
into action*

West Michigan Environmental Action Council

1424 Lake Drive, S.E. • Grand Rapids, Michigan 49506 • 616-451-3051

CERTIFIED MAIL
RETURN RECEIPT REQUESTED

August 24, 1983

Mr. Curt A. Kemppainen
Assistant Director
Board of Public Works
1500 Scribner Ave., N.W.
Grand Rapids, MI 49504

RECEIVED
GROUNDWATER QUALITY DIV.

AUG 25 1983

DISTRICT 9
GRAND RAPIDS

US EPA RECORDS CENTER REGION 5



Dear Mr. Kemppainen:

Thank you for your letter of August 22, 1983 and the materials enclosed therein. A check for \$6.96 for charges incurred relative to our Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) Request of August 11, 1983 is enclosed.

Also in respect to said FOIA Request, I would like to modify the first series of items requested. Rather than seeking all laboratory analysis reports for samples taken from all past and present monitoring wells, we are requesting at this time the results of volatile organic analysis done on water samples taken in June, 1983.

I note that the NPDES permit (No. MI 0037486) for the North Kent Landfill requires the County to develop "a contingency plan outlining remedial actions to be taken in the event permit limitations are exceeded." Permit No. MI 0037486, Part I, A-4. This contingency plan was to have been provided to the DNR by April 30, 1982. Permit No. MI 0037486, Part I, C-3. In accordance with the Freedom of Information Act, I would like to request a copy of said contingency plan and any comments on or modifications thereof suggested or required by the Department of Natural Resources.

As Rick Newberry informed you yesterday, this morning the West Michigan Environmental Action Council held a press conference to alert the public of the situation at the 10 Mile Landfill and to call for certain actions on the part of the Department of Public Works, the Kent County Department of Public Health and the Department of Natural Resources. The gist of my remarks, a copy of which is enclosed, was that there is not cause for alarm, but there is cause for concern.

I am aware that you believe that current contamination problems will eventually dissipate. Nevertheless, I believe the public has a right to know of the current contamination as well as to be assured that steps will be taken now to prepare for the possibility--which I would characterize as likely--that this problem will not "just go away." Therefore, I am formally requesting that the Department of Public Works, in conjunction

with the KCDPH and the DNR, take the following steps:

1. That monitoring wells be sampled and analyzed for organic chemicals on a quarterly basis;
2. That domestic wells in the area of the landfill be tested for organic chemicals to determine whether these chemicals are currently present or to establish baseline levels of water quality for these wells and future testing of these wells on a regular basis;
3. That the various concerned parties work together to establish a system of monitoring wells that will determine if and when the contaminated groundwater travels off site and the direction and velocity of flow of that groundwater;
4. That the county begin to develop a contingency plan to mitigate contamination problems should they extend beyond the facility's boundaries; and
5. That the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Public Works issue a report of problems at the site, including information on how problems will be corrected and the basis for the site's failure.

WMEAC would, of course, be happy to work with you on this effort.

Let me assure you, as Rick did, that WMEAC is not attempting to unduly alarm citizens about the situation at the 10 Mile Landfill. Rather, we believe that if citizens are informed of the situation before it becomes a full-blown health hazard, the animosity toward and distrust in government that often results when citizens are not informed of problems until the last minute can be avoided. We also believe that citizens can play a valuable role in determining public policy. The fact that in 1975 WMEAC predicted the problems which have now arisen, and in fact have occurred since day one at 10 Mile, exhibits that citizens can have substantive input to the decisions of resource professionals and should be listened to by those professionals.

Thank you for your cooperation on this issue. I am looking forward to receiving the materials requested under the Freedom of Information Act as well as your response to our request for specific actions to be taken concerning the North Kent Landfill.

Sincerely yours,



Frank Ruswick, Jr.
Executive Director

cc: George Pio, KCDPH (w/ enclosure)
Gerald Heyt, MDNR (w/ enclosure)